

# BOARDROOM CHATTER

PUBLICATION PREPARED BY: THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### ***Recognize March as Youth Art Month***

The school board presented a proclamation to Mr. Jeff Avey, ACPS Coordinator of Fine Arts, recognizing March 2016 as Youth Art Month as designated by the National Art Education Association. This year's theme is "The Power of Art."

Art education contributes powerful educational benefits to all elementary, middle and high school students; develops students' creative problem-solving and critical thinking abilities; teaches sensitivity to beauty, order and other expressive qualities; gives students a deeper understanding of multicultural values and beliefs; reinforces and brings to life what students learn in other subjects; and interrelates student learning in art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics.

### ***Recognize March as Music in Our Schools Month***

The school board presented another proclamation to Mr. Avey recognizing March 2016 as Music in Our Schools Month as designated by the National Association for Music Education. This year's theme is "Music Inspires."

The study of music contributes to the development of young people through heightened skills in listening, reading, self-expression and creativity. It is basic to a complete education and provides a competitive edge for successful educational reform while engaging students in individual and group activities which develops creativity, problem-solving and critical and evaluative skills. Music education helps students acquire skills in the production and performance of music, as well as gives them an understanding of history and culture. Music and other arts significantly

enhance the morale and quality of the school environment. Music programs should be maintained and improved for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status of their abilities.

### ***Legislative Update***

The Maryland General Assembly is currently still in session, and Dr. Cox updated the school board on several noteworthy bills. HB 1433 establishes specific funding for pre-kindergarten students by altering the definition of full-time equivalent enrollment to include pre-k students in the number of students enrolled for purposes of calculating specified state aid formulas for education.

The Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland (PSSAM) supports HB 1433. Since the passage of the Bridge to Excellence Act of 2002, local school systems have been providing half-day pre-k for all eligible four year olds, which equates to approximately 30,000 students per year. Maryland's school finance system is built on per pupil funding; however, pre-k students are not included in the annual September 30<sup>th</sup> enrollment counts for state and local education aid.

Under HB 1433, providing full-day pre-k would remain at the discretion of local school boards, but when it is provided, it would be fully funded.

Additionally, Dr. Cox noted that HB 1343, HB 453, and HB 1213 are all education tax credit bills that would take funding from public schools to provide to private schools. PSSAM opposes all of these bills.

## Board of Education

Dr. Edward Root, President  
Mrs. Laurie Marchini, VP  
Mr. Nicholas Hadley  
Ms. Sara-Beth James  
Mr. Wayne Foote  
Ms. Jenna Puffinburger, SMOB  
Dr. David Cox, Superintendent

## CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for February 16, 2016, Work Session; February 16, 2016, Business Meeting; and March 1, 2016, Special Work Session.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of February 1-29, 2016.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for period of February 1-29, 2016.
4. Receive information technology report for the period of February 1-29, 2016

The consent agenda was unanimously approved.

## NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled Work Session and Business Meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. respectively.

# WORK SESSION NOTABLES

## *Music in Our Schools and Youth Art Update*

Mr. Jeff Avey, ACPS Coordinator of Fine Arts, introduced Mountain Ridge High School seniors, Hannah Livingston and Eileen Zheng, who performed Concerto in D minor, movement one by J.S. Bach, on the violins. These two students were members of the first fourth grade class from the launching of the Mountain Ridge District orchestra program nine years ago.

## *Maintenance and Construction Update*

ACPS Director of Facilities, Vince Montana, updated the school board on various ongoing or upcoming maintenance and construction projects. They are as follows:

- **Allegany High School:** Bids were opened as scheduled on February 24<sup>th</sup>.
- **CIP 2017:** The BPW has approved partial funding for the Allegany High School project, and staff is awaiting the final funding recommendations, which may include funding for the Mt. Savage Roof project.
- **Administration Building:** Maintenance department staff completed the addition of a galley kitchen at the Central Office. With minor alterations, they were able to install this galley on the first floor in what was a janitors' closet. This project was completed at little cost by utilizing material repurposed from the former Braddock hospital along with surplus materials from the ACPS warehouse. Staff was also able to replace the janitors' sink with a new mop sink at floor level.
- **South Penn A/C:** DGS review comments were received and ACPS's response was accepted. The project was advertised for bids, and a pre-bid meeting was held on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. Bids will be received on March 16<sup>th</sup>.
- **Washington Middle School:** Electrical and computer wiring has been installed for the two Active Learning Labs. New light fixtures were also installed.
- **FEMA:** Staff is compiling information for FEMA concerning school system expenses for snow removal following the January 22<sup>nd</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup> snowstorm. FEMA has scheduled a kick-off meeting for March 17<sup>th</sup> at which time they will explain the forms that must be submitted.
- **Water Tanks:** Maintenance department crews moved two water tanks into West Side and Westmar. The water heater at West Side has a capacity of 120 gallons and is conveniently located in a mezzanine level mechanical room above the gym. The tank was hoisted to the roof by a crane and then moved into the mechanical room. The tank at Westmar was a hot water storage tank. It was lowered into the boiler room by the crane and moved into place. The old tanks were removed, and crews have begun to hook-up the new ones.
- **Flooring Replacements:** Staff is currently reviewing and

prioritizing flooring replacement at several schools. The replacement will take place over the summer if funding and schedules allow.

## *CTE IT Networking Program and ACPS/ACM Computer Science and Technology Articulation Agreement*

Mrs. Candy Canan, Principal at the Career Center, updated the school board on the articulation agreement with ACM for the IT Networking Academy at the school. At the Career Center, there are five courses that comprise the IT Networking Academy. They are IT Essentials I and II PC Hardware and Software; Ethics and the Information Age; Honors Working at a Small to Medium Business; Honors Networking for Home and Small Business; and Honors Networking Systems Workplace Experience. A total of six credits can be earned over the course of two years at CCTE.

An articulation agreement is defined as an officially approved agreement between two institutions, which allows a student to apply credits earned in specific programs at one institution toward advanced standing, entry or transfer into a specific program at the other institution.

CCTE's previous articulation agreement with ACM was established in 2004 and aligned with the old program model IT Computer Installer and Repair. The CCTE program transitioned in 2008 to the IT Networking Academy, and the previous articulation no longer aligned to the new course offered at CCTE. After much discussion and collaboration, a new articulation was developed which allows students completing the program at CCTE to earn twelve or thirteen credits upon successful program completion toward a Cybersecurity Certificate or Associate Degree in Cybersecurity. The thirteenth credit can be earned with the successful passage of the A+ Hardware and A+ Operating Systems exam.

The articulation agreement requires students to complete the entire program at CCTE with a B average in all courses. Students must also take advantage of the articulation within two years of exiting high school. Credits will be posted after a student successfully completes one semester at ACM.

Mrs. Canan also shared with the school board an additional opportunity available at the Career Center. Two college courses, unique for CCTE students, are offered as early college/dual enrollment courses. College Computer Literacy is a ½ high school credit and three college credits, and College Computer Logic is a ½ high school credit and four college credits. Students enrolled in the IT Networking Academy at CCTE have the opportunity to earn a total of 20 college credits toward a Cybersecurity Certificate or Associate of Applied Science Degree in Cybersecurity. Students enrolled

in CTE IT Networking Academy can also choose to apply nine credits of the articulation toward additional Computer Science Degrees or Certificates at ACM.

### ***ACM Computer Technology Cybersecurity Option***

Ms. Kristi Smith, Associate Professor of Computer Science at Allegany College of Maryland, updated the school board on the cybersecurity program at ACM. Cybersecurity focuses on the measures taken to protect digital information against unauthorized access or attack. Maryland has become the epicenter for innovation in cybersecurity. Through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) at the Department of Labor, ACM was awarded a four-year grant in the amount of \$800,000 to establish a cybersecurity program. Through the program, education and training must be completed in two years or less. Fourteen of the sixteen Maryland community colleges are participating in this statewide effort to establish cyber pathways across the state. Montgomery College is leading the consortium that is working to develop a statewide system of requirements for cybersecurity. Credit will be awarded for prior learning, and programs will be aligned with industry-recognized credentials and will afford transfer opportunities.

According to Ms. Smith, Forbes predicts a worldwide shortage with one million job openings this year. This number is expected to increase to six million over the next three years. More than 20,000 job openings will be available in Maryland and D.C. in positions such as security compliance professionals, security analysts, security engineers, penetration testers, and ethical hackers. ACM is working with employers to establish paid internships, virtual internship opportunities and telecommuting options. Through the consortium, there will be a database that links students directly to employers ready to hire, and a volunteer cyber mission has been established through the Department of Homeland Security. The target market, through the grant, is TAA or displaced workers, veterans, unemployed or underemployed individuals, incumbent workers, and women and minorities underrepresented in the IT field.

ACM now features state-of-the-art renovated labs and equipment and offers students a one-year certificate, a two-year career option or a two-year transfer option through Frostburg State University and St. Francis University. ACM offers students short-term industry certification in CompTIA Security +, CompTIA A+ and Cisco CCNA. Non-credit opportunities are available through the Accredited Training Center for Certified Ethical Hacker Certification through the EC Council. For more information, visit [www.allegany.edu/cyber](http://www.allegany.edu/cyber).

### ***P-Tech Grant Proposal***

Dr. Kim Green, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, updated the school board on a P-Tech Grant opportunity through the Maryland State Department of Education. The Pathways in Technology Early College High School is a 9-14 school model, which combines high school, college and the world of work. The P-Tech mission is to provide students with an education that starts in grade nine, continues through high school completion with a high school diploma, and culminates in the attainment of an Associate Degree program. The program also includes authentic work experiences designed to prepare students for positions in an identified career field.

MSDE is seeking applicants for planning grants leading to two new P-Tech schools. Proposals are due March 15<sup>th</sup> with selection occurring in April. Eligible systems must partner with one or more higher education institutions and an employer. ACPS has proposed that a cohort of students will participate in a six-year program of study beginning in grade nine that is sequential and blends high school, college, and careers. The focus will be on Computer Technology with a Cybersecurity option. Students will fulfill the requirements of a career and technology completer in the IT Networking Academy at the Career Center and will earn college credits through dual enrollment classes at CTE, online or at ACM. Each student will move through a personalized academic pathway that is based on individual needs, career aspirations, and academic performance. Teachers, an advisor, a school counselor and a business mentor will closely monitor the students.

ACPS will partner with ACM, and Frostburg State University will also participate in the partnership by creating an agreement with ACM for P-Tech students who desire to transfer to FSU to earn a four-year degree in a computer science field. Students in the program will gain workplace skills, mentoring and other career experiences through a partnership with a local business partner, Western Maryland Health System. Other businesses that have agreed to participate include Exclamation Labs, Willetts Systems, Inc., and First United Bank and Trust.

The major goal of the P-Tech program of study is for all students to earn an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Computer

Technology with a Cybersecurity option within two years of graduating from ACPS. The P-Tech model also provides accelerated pathways for students who choose to take more college courses during their high school experience. Potentially, students could have the opportunity to earn 42 college credits by the end of their senior year. Students who move through the coursework at an accelerated pace can also potentially earn a second Associate of Applied Science Degree in another option such as programming, web development, and technical support within the Computer Technology program within six years. Some students may also elect to transfer to FSU to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in a Computer Science field.

The P-Tech program is designed to be open to all students and will focus on providing college and career access to students living in poverty, students with disabilities, and historically underrepresented student populations. ACPS is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the state for free and reduced lunch percentages for FY 2016, and 56% of ACPS students come from economically disadvantaged homes. The state average is 44%.

The program provides students with a high school to college to career continuum that helps them understand the interrelationships between what they are currently learning in high school and how it applies to college and careers. The five core benefits of the program for students are as follows:

1. Rigorous and relevant program focused on the knowledge and skills students need for STEM careers;
2. Workplace learning that includes ongoing mentoring by professionals in the chosen career sector, worksite visits, speakers and internships;
3. Intensive, individualized academic support;
4. A cost-free two-year degree in a high tech field targeted to increase opportunities for students;
5. A commitment from the business partner for the student to be first in line for consideration for a job following successful completion of the program.

The next step for ACPS is to submit a grant proposal to MSDE by March 15, 2016. Two P-Tech planning grants will be awarded by April 15, 2016. If awarded the planning grant, ACPS will have until September 30, 2017, to create a plan for implementing the program. The intent of ACPS is to create an innovative and collaborative model that builds on existing strengths and benefits students in Allegany County.

### **Calendar Considerations 2016-2017**

Dr. Green updated the school board on the proposed 2016-2017 school calendar. Modifications from the original draft were made in response to comments and feedback received from teachers, principals, supervisors, and parents. The highlighted items are as follows:

- The first day of school for teachers is August 17, 2016.

- The first day of school for students in August 23, 2016.
- Schools will now be closed al full day for parent conferences on September 29, 2016, to allow for more time for meetings and for those parents with students at multiple grade levels. The same is true for the second parent conference day on February 15, 2017.
- Schools will be closed on October 18, 2016, for both supervisor and principal staff development. This is new this year at the recommendation of teachers, principals and supervisors.
- Dr. Green noted that there is new language in next year's calendar indicating on days with a 3-hour early dismissal with afternoon teacher work time, if schools are closed for inclement weather, the make-up day will occur on the next full day of school.
- Schools will now be closed the Monday after Thanksgiving.
- Schools and offices will be closed on Friday, December 23, 2016, as opposed to a 3-hour early dismissal. This is because Christmas falls on a weekend. The same is true for Monday, January 2, 2017, as New Year's Day falls on a Sunday.
- Staff has decided to maintain schools being closed on January 25, 2017, for supervisor staff development.
- Mountain Ridge High School's graduation was moved to after Memorial Day in order to secure FSU as the venue.
- The last day of school for students, before five built-in days, will be May 31, 2017. The last day for students, with five built-in days, will be June 7, 2017.
- The last day of school for teachers, before five built-in days, will be June 1, 2017. The last day for teachers, with five built-in days, will be June 8, 2017.

### **Policy Regulation:**

- **School Attendance Areas (File: JC-R):** The school board was updated on the regulations for this policy, whose purpose is "to establish school attendance areas." The policy states, "The County shall be divided into appropriate school attendance areas by the Board of Education. With the advice of the Superintendent, the Board shall determine the geographical attendance areas for each school."
- **Substance Abuse by Students (File: JICH-R):** The school board was updated on the regulations for this policy, whose purpose is "to prohibit the use, abuse, sale, possession or distribution of proscribed substances by students on school property, or at school related activities. The underlying rationale of this policy is to protect students and promote their

health and well being.” The policy states, “The Board of Education supports strong and consistent disciplinary measures to ensure that students recognize that the possession, use, abuse, sale and/or distribution of proscribed substances present health dangers and may constitute illegal acts.”

- **School Facilities (File: ECAB-R):** The school board was updated on the regulations for this policy, whose purpose is “to assign responsibilities for controlled access to school facilities and offices.” The policy states, “In order to promote safety and security in the schools, the Board directs the Superintendent to control access to school facilities. Only authorized persons shall be granted the means of access to school facilities.”

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### *Consider Second Reading of the Policy for School Board Member Services (File: BI)*

The school board approved, by a four to one vote, the second reading of the above policy, whose purpose is “to describe services available to elected Board members.”

The policy states, “Members of the Board of Education of Allegany County are entitled to specific services as elected officials. Included among these services are membership in the Maryland Association of Boards of Education; participation in board meetings as board member-elect; professional development; compensation expenses; and other services.

### *Ms. Tamar Clarke, Constituent*

Ms. Clarke addressed the school board regarding the health and wellbeing of children, specifically children with special needs. She believes that fluoride in water, mandatory vaccinations, and miscellaneous toxins are to blame for children’s inability to learn and thrive. She provided the school board with several articles discussing the impact of fluoridation on a child’s I.Q. Ms. Clarke also questioned the mandatory vaccination program required for entrance into public schools, implying that vaccines are to blame for autism and learning disabilities. Finally, Ms. Clarke noted that processed foods, mercury used in dental fillings and the increase in sugar consumption are directly related to learning disabilities. She asked the school board to conduct research into the root causes of learning and behavior disorders.

## NEW BUSINESS

### *Consider Approving 2016–2017 School Calendar*

The school board approved the 2016-2017 school calendar as presented at the Work Session. Next year’s school calendar is available on the school system’s website at [www.acpsmd.org](http://www.acpsmd.org).

### *Ratification of Poll Vote for Potential 2015–2016 Calendar Change*

Last month, in preparation for predicted inclement weather, the school system approved the modification of the 2015-2016 calendar, should the need arise. If it had been necessary for a two-hour delay on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, an already scheduled early dismissal for parent conferences, this day would have become an instructional day (with a two-hour delayed opening) for students. Wednesday’s originally scheduled early dismissal, with afternoon parent conferences, would have been moved to Friday, February 26, 2016. No inclement weather occurred, making this calendar adjustment unnecessary.

### *Consider Accepting Superintendent’s Proposed FY2017 Operating Budget*

The school board approved the Superintendent’s proposed FY2017 Operating Budget, by a four to one vote, which totals \$112,110,990. This action has established a request to county government for county funding. Within this budget, the Superintendent is requesting \$31,902,460 from county government, which is above the Maintenance of Effort level.

A balanced budget must be submitted to county government by March 24, 2016. If county government does not fund this request, adjustments will need to be sent for their approval in June. The county is responsible for setting the budget by expenditure category.

### *Consider Approving P-Tech Grant Proposal*

The school board approved the P-Tech Grant proposal as presented in the Work Session. P-Tech stands for Pathways in Technology Early College High School.

### *Allegany High School Replacement Project Update*

The school board approved, by a four to one vote, the award of contract for the construction of the Allegany High School Replacement to Leonard S. Fiore, Inc. of Altoona, PA. The contract includes the base bid of \$50,275,000; Alternate 2E for \$236,000; Alternate 7A for \$52,000; Alternate 11 for \$11,000; Alternate 14A for \$96,000; and Alternate 14B for \$107,000 for a total contract cost of \$50,783,000.

## REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ***Ms. Jenna Puffinburger, Student Member of the Board***

Jenna informed the school board that the Allegany County Association of Student Councils (ACASC) recently held its third General Assembly, and students attended it from all four middle and high schools. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in workshops presented by ACASC Executive Board Members on topics including the environment, campaigning, and communication skills. Also in attendance at the session was the Assistant Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Student Councils (MASC) as well as the MASC Vice-President, who presented a workshop on parliamentary procedure. ACASC members also had the opportunity to vote on three pieces of legislation during the session. The next General Assembly will feature ACASC elections for next year's executive board.

Jenna reported that many schools have been participating in blood drives and prom planning. Mountain Ridge students participated in a fundraiser through Heifer International, and thanks to their efforts were able to provide several goats and flocks of chicks to families in developing countries.

Mock debates are currently underway, and both Allegany and Fort Hill High Schools have selected their Democratic and Republican candidates to participate in the county-level debate scheduled for March 31, 2016. Dr. Cox will be a guest judge at the event.

Jenna also updated the school board on an upcoming meeting that she has scheduled with Nancy Forlifer to discuss the results of the Youth Engagement Survey.

Finally, Jenna and fellow ACASC board member, Thorne Lindsey, are formulating plans to help gauge and boost student morale in regards to their academic schedules and course offerings.

The school board noted that their approval is contingent on the receipt of adequate funding to meet the amount of the bid.

### ***Consider First Reading of Policy for Substance Abuse by Students (File: JICH)***

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to prohibit the use, abuse, sale, possession or distribution of proscribed substances by students on school property, or at school related activities. The underlying rationale of this policy is to protect students and promote their health and well being."

The policy states, "The Board of Education supports strong and consistent disciplinary measures to ensure that students recognize that the possession, use, abuse, sale and/or distribution of proscribed substances present health dangers and may constitute illegal acts."

### ***Consider First Reading of Policy for Federal Awards (File: DDC)***

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is as follows: "The Super Circular has imposed a duty on a recipient of federal awards to establish written procedures to comply with federal requirements in order to receive federal awards. As to all federal awards, recipients are required to establish written procedures for 1) requesting payment; 2) determining the allowability of costs; 3) regulating procurement; and 4) identifying and avoiding conflicts of interest."

The policy states, "The Superintendent shall establish regulations to comply with the directives of the Super Circular related to 1) the administration of funds received through federal awards; 2) the allowability of costs related to federal awards; 3) procurement of goods and services to implement federal awards; and 4) the identification and avoidance of conflicts of interest related to the administration of federal awards."

### ***Consider First Reading of Policy for School Facilities (File: ECAB)***

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to assign responsibilities for controlled access to school facilities and offices."

The policy states, "In order to promote safety and security in the schools, the Board directs the Superintendent to control access to school facilities. Only authorized persons shall be granted the means of access to school facilities."

### ***Consider First Reading of Policy for Evaluation of Professional Staff-Teachers (File: GCAG)***

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to establish the board's position regarding teacher evaluation."

The policy states, "Teachers shall have their work performance reviewed by supervisors and/or principals on a regular basis in accordance with local policies and the provisions of the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR 13A.07.04)."

### ***Vote to Meet in Executive Session in April***

The school board voted to meet in an Executive Session on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, pending any appeals or unfinished business.