

BOARDROOM CHATTER

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Recognize 2016 Allegany County Unified Track State Champions

The school board recognized the 2016 Allegany County Unified Track team for being named 2016 State Champions.

Members of Allegany's Unified Track team are as follows: Justin Johnson, Chloe Frost, Joshua Frost, Jayla Evans, Michael Snyder, Hillard Dietrich, Akhary Williams, Annie Grimm, Coleton Furlow, Jade Nelson, and Jaden Shockey.

Members of Fort Hill's Unified Track team are as follows: Daniel Lohr, Kenny Merica, Addison Long, Kaylynn Robertson, Samuel Arnone, Cody Buskirk, Draesan Hetz, Kara Lashbaugh, Justin Platter, Seth Rechart, and Dawn Roy.

Members of Mountain Ridge's Unified Track team are as follows: Lacey Hoopengartner, Brianna Ralston, William Smith, Jordyn Green, Alyssa Devault, Sydney Crawford, Ashee Singh, Jazzy Wilburn, Corey Winters, Wyatt McKenzie, and Dylan Bonney.

Tammy Twigg coaches Allegany's team; Roy DeVore, Jr.; coaches Fort Hill's team and Roy DeVore, Sr. coaches Mountain Ridge's team.

Recognize 2016 MPSSAA 1A Track and Field State Champions

The school board recognized several student athletes for earning the title of 2016 MPSSAA 1A Track and Field State Champions in their respective events. The students honored for their accomplishments are as follows:

- Carter Nave, Allegany – Boys Pole Vault (height of 13 ft. 5 in.)
- Aubree Boyle, Allegany – Girls Long Jump (distance of 16 ft. 11 in.)

- Chase DeWitt, Allegany – Boys Discus Throw (distance of 156 ft. 5 in.)
- Timmy Friend, Fort Hill – Boys Shot Put (distance of 49 ft. 2.5 in.)
- Molly Offstein, Mountain Ridge – Girls 1600 Meter Run (time of 5.00.26 min.)

Allegany's track and field coach is Dennys Salas; Fort Hill's track and field coach is Zach Alkire; and Mountain Ridge's track and field coach is Melissa Hankinson.

Recognize 2016 Senior Division Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award for Maryland Recipient

The school board recognized Allegany High School teacher, Kimberly Sloane, for receiving the 2016 Senior Division Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award for Maryland. This award is given to a teacher who has shown outstanding creativity, commitment, and inspiration in developing student interest in history education.

Their administrators, peers, or themselves can nominate teachers. To qualify for the award, teachers must participate in the National History Day Contest and demonstrate excellence in the classroom. A team of teachers, administrators and historians chooses winners. Their work must teach methods that interest students in history and help them make exciting discoveries about the past.

Recognize 2015-2016 Student Member of the Board

The school board honored outgoing Student Member of the Board, Jenna Puffinburger, for her outstanding service, dedication, and contributions during the 2015-2016 school year. Members presented Jenna with a Certificate of

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

Recognition and several other gifts as a token of their appreciation. Jenna will attend Frostburg State University in the fall. Next year's SMOB is Zachary Sterne.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for May 10, 2016, Work Session and Business Meeting.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of May 1-31, 2016.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of May 1-31, 2016.
4. Receive information technology report for the period of May 1-31, 2016.
5. Approve 2016 Master Plan for School Facilities.
6. Approve bids from Erie Insurance in the amount of \$54,968 with \$5,000 PIP for the school buses and \$23,073 with \$5,000 PIP for the board fleet.
7. Approve MOU between ACPS and the Allegany County Library System to share fiber between schools and the six county libraries.
8. Approve 2016-2017 Special Education Staffing Plan.

The school board approved the consent agenda.

WORK SESSION NOTABLES

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:

- **Braddock Campus:** The pre-construction meeting with the architect, contractor, school board and county staff was held on May 19th. Section A will include the music rooms, auditorium, locker rooms and offices; Section B will include the gyms, kitchen, serving lines, cafeteria, and custodial areas; and Section C will include the classroom wing. Temporary facilities have been setup. Trees have been removed, clearing and grubbing, and sediment controls are complete. The contractor has begun excavation of Section C. They have been able to move the rock with equipment, and blasting may not be necessary. According to the schedule, they will complete the excavation by the end of the week, and work will begin on the footers within the next two weeks. Excavation will continue into early August. The concrete footers for the front wall of the classroom wing are 2' wide by 8' wide. The wall is 16" wide with a 4" concrete block veneer and 15'4" high. The sediment control pond has been excavated and is being rebuilt for the construction stage. Excavation for the utilities will begin this week. Work on the retaining walls will begin mid-July.
- **Braddock Roof Replacement:** Work on the gym roofing will be completed this week. Installation of the metal trim and on the classroom section will begin next week. The roofing tar is almost odorless. The only noticeable odor is from the adhesive used to secure the insulation. Staff has purchased four replacement exhaust fans for the restrooms and gym locker rooms. The roofing contractor is assisting the installation by lifting the units to the roof and framing the openings. The materials for the classroom section have been delivered.
- **Frost Roof Replacement:** An auction by the BPW has delayed the release of FY 2017 ASP funds. The issue should be resolved by the end of June.
- **South Penn Chiller Replacement:** The chiller has been delivered and is in place. The piping and electrical wiring has been installed. The new cooling tower was delivered on June 13th. The electrical wiring and piping are being installed to

the tower. Installation of the control system will begin later this week, and the unit will be ready for start-up late next week.

- **Floor Replacement Projects:** The asbestos floor tile replacement at Washington has begun, and new tile will be installed in six rooms totaling approximately 5,000 sq. ft. Work has begun at Bel Air to replace the carpet with vinyl floor tile in approximately 50% of the instructional area totaling 14,000 sq. ft. The remainder of the carpet will be replaced next year. Carpet is being replaced with tile in three classrooms at Northeast. Carpet is being replaced in one room at West Side.
- **Westernport Air Conditioning:** The basement area at Westernport was not air conditioned with the rest of the building because window units would interfere with the flood panels. Staff received an estimate to install wall-mounted mini-split systems in the basement classrooms. The estimate exceeded \$100,000. Staff has purchased the mini-split systems at a cost of \$24,000. Maintenance staff will install the units as time allows.

FY 2017 Operating Budget

Dr. Cox and Michele Crowe, senior accountant for ACPS, updated the school board on changes to the FY 2017 requested operating budget. The school board originally requested \$31,902,460 from the county; however, the school system was only approved for \$30,099,757 in funding from county government – the minimum allowed. Therefore, it was necessary for the school board to reduce its FY 2017 budget by approximately \$1.8 million in order to balance the budget. Thanks to the hard work of the finance department and Dr. Cox's senior staff, the school board was able to reduce this budget by \$2,025,341, and only drew on the fund balance for \$274,000. Additionally, adjustments made have created variances that will help replenish the fund balance. School systems are required to carry a positive fund balance.

Mrs. Crowe highlighted several areas in which cuts were made in an effort to balance the budget. \$1.5 million, due in large part to the denial of special budget requests, position changes and eliminations, reduced salaries and wages and other instructional costs. After all the adjustments, the school board will now ask county government to approve a budget of \$110,085,649, a reduction of \$2,025,341 from its originally request budget for FY 2017.

Guidance on Transgender Students

Dr. Cox and school board attorney, Mr. Gary Hanna, updated the school board on the guidance received from the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education regarding transgender and gender non-conforming youth. In October of 2015, the Maryland State Department of Education issued a document entitled “Providing Safe Spaces for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Youth: Guidelines for Gender Identity Non-Discrimination.” Then in May of this year, the USDJ and the USDE provided school systems with joint guidance on these issues. All of these documents can be found on the school system’s website, www.acpsmd.org, under the Parent Resources tab.

More recently, the 4th Circuit Court, of which Maryland is a part of, issued an opinion on a case appealed to them from Gloucester County, VA, in which a transgender boy filed suit in district court to be allowed to use the boys’ facilities in his school. The district court in Virginia ruled against the case; however, a panel of three judges in the 4th Circuit Court had differing opinions. Two of the three judges voted to reverse the district court’s decision and ruled in favor of the transgender boy arguing that gender identity is part of one’s sex. As a result, this is now a binding opinion in the 4th Circuit.

The Maryland Attorney General has since issued a letter encouraging school systems in Maryland to comply with the federal order, indicating that appeals in districts to the 4th Circuit will be decided the same way. Non-compliance may result in the loss of federal funds for school systems.

ACPS staff will work in the coming weeks and months to draft policy statements to comply with the opinion of the 4th Circuit Court on the topic of transgender and gender non-conforming youth in an effort to provide all students with a safe and comfortable learning environment.

Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Dr. Cox asked the school board to consider asking the policy committee to review the policy and regulations for Eligibility – Minimum Standards for Participation in Athletics (File: JJIC) and the policy and regulations for Substance Abuse by Students (File: JICH) to extend them to other extracurricular activities beyond athletics, and to what extent. These policies give specific guidelines regarding the infractions of student athletes; however, Dr. Cox suggested revising them to be more inclusive of other student groups and activities. School board members agreed that the policy committee should begin to revise these policies.

Report of Class of 2016

The Allegany County Public School System is proud to announce that students in the graduating Class of 2016 have

been accepted to 57 different colleges, universities, and technical schools across the country. Of the 654 graduates, 255 of them have chosen to continue their studies locally at either Allegany College of Maryland or Frostburg State University. In addition, 264 graduates were offered a total of \$9,349,211 in merit, athletic, and senatorial scholarships.

Additionally, two students will have the opportunity to attend Ivy League schools in the fall. Thorne Lindsey of Allegany High School will enroll at the University of Pennsylvania, and Dylan Rice of Fort Hill High School will enroll at Harvard University.

According to a survey administered to graduating seniors, nearly 70% of those surveyed plan to pursue post-secondary education. 254 students plan to attend a 2-year college; 161 students plan to attend a 4-year college; 16 students plan to enter the military; 9 students plan to attend a technical school; 148 students plan to enter the workforce; and 30 students were undecided about post-secondary plans.

In addition, the projected advanced placement enrollment for the 2016-2017 school year is 1,439, up from last school year. The projected dual enrollment for the 2016-2017 school year is 293, down slightly from last year.

Secondary NGSS/MISA Transition

Mr. Erick VanSlyke, ACPS Supervisor of Science, updated the school board on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA). MISA testing in middle school begins next year, which will be a no fault year to simply collect baseline testing data. MISA testing at the high school level will begin in school year 2017-2018, and this will also be a no fault year. ACPS has asked for an additional year to set baseline scores and are awaiting confirmation from the USDE.

The soon-to-be replaced High School Assessment (HSA) typically used standard multiple-choice questions. The new MISA will utilize a group of questions with one stimulus at the beginning followed by several questions. Within each question set there will be at least two performance expectations and at least two processes of science. ACPS has begun to adjust instruction to align with this more integrated assessment approach.

Currently in middle school, earth science, life science and physical science are all separate courses. With NGSS’s integrated approach, each year these three sciences will be blended and taught together. This integrated model is called phenomena-based instruction and better prepares students for the MISA. This shift to integrated science begins next year in sixth grade with the eighth grade shift taking place during the 2018-2019 school year.

WORK SESSION NOTABLES CONT.

Currently at the high school level, students take biology as a first course, a lab science as their second course, and then finally another science course. With the transition to NGSS, students will now take physics as a first course, chemistry as a second course, and finally biology as a third course. Earth Science Standards will be integrated within each of these three courses. This integration at the high school level begins next year as performance expectations from physics are integrated into earth science. Next year, all other courses will remain the same.

2016-2017 Review of Special Education Staffing Plan

The school board heard an update of the 2016-2017 Special Education Staffing Plan. ACPS administration and staff believe that every student can learn, deserves a quality education, and has the right to attend neighborhood schools regardless of his/her disability. In order to fulfill the responsibility to all students with disabilities across ACPS settings, the Special Education Department supports school administrators who welcome all children and strive to develop appropriate supports for all children; school-based practices that reflect the needs of all students; and the efficient use of funds and educational resources for all students.

ACPS bases its determinations about staffing on student needs. The following factors were considered when formulating next year's staffing plan: access to the general curriculum; a full continuum of services; the least restrictive environment; individual student concerns; direct and/or indirect services; collaboration with general education; linkages to student assessment results; natural proportions of students with disabilities in the general population; staff/student ratios; and parental input.

The staffing plan was developed with the goals and objectives of the ACPS Master Plan in mind. The components of the Master Plan address student achievement, highly qualified personnel, home/school/community relationships, and a safe and orderly learning environment. In addition, the components of the staffing plan have been publicly discussed as part of the budgetary process through various avenues.

Estimated state and local funds for Special Education in FY 2016 equaled \$19,100,018, and the proposed FY 2017 budget for special education is \$19,213,873. Allegany County's local application for federal funds for FY 2017 was submitted to MSDE on May 15, 2016. The Infant and Toddler grant application was submitted on May 27, 2016.

Staffing decisions for the 2016-2017 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 2016-2017 school year: 85.7 teaching positions, 90 full-time instructional assistants, and 18.5 part-time instructional assistants. In addition, 37.7 professional staff will be employed, including audiology, speech, vision, interpreter, mental health counselor, infants and toddlers coordinator, facilitators, elementary behavior specialists, non-public, transitioning specialist, preschool clinic, assistant technology and data management, instructional specialist, special programs specialist, and itinerant autism specialist.

Changes affecting caseload and staffing throughout the school year requires flexibility of staffing issues. 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. Therefore, as students' IEPs are developed throughout the school year, staff changes may be required. This staffing plan will be reviewed at monthly staffing meetings and quarterly Special Education Citizen's Advisory Committee meetings. During these meetings, the administrative staff will update the staffing assignments and indicate any adjustments that occurred in order to meet students' IEP goals and objectives.

Policy Regulations:

- ***Evaluation of Professional Staff – Teachers (File: GCAG-R1)*** The school board was updated on the regulations for 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.”
- ***School Attendance Areas (File: JC-R1)*** The school board was updated on the regulations for the above policy, whose purpose is “to establish school attendance areas.” The policy states, “The country shall be divided into appropriate school attendance areas by the Board. With the advice of the Superintendent, the Board shall determine the geographical attendance areas for each school. A student shall attend the school designated to serve the attendance area in which their legal guardian resides unless special permission has been granted by the Superintendent or designee to attend a school in another attendance area in Allegany County. The Board recognizes that exceptions to this policy may also be granted by state and/or federal laws such as kinship care and/or homelessness.”

NEW BUSINESS

Recognize Mrs. Sheree Witt

The school board honored Mrs. Sheree Witt, ACPS Director of Special Education and Student Services, for her exceptional career within the school system and for her dedication to the students of Allegany County. Mrs. Witt will retire after 38 years at the end of the month. Her department also produced a [farewell video](#), which was shown during the business meeting.

Consider Adopting FY 2017 Operating Budget

The school board voted to adopt the revised FY 2017 operating budget as presented at the work session.

Consider Retaining the Allegany County Public Schools Foundation

The school board voted to retain the ACPS Foundation and associated costs to include the tax return and any insurance for this year.

Consider the Ratification of Unit I and IV as Negotiated

Mr. Jeff Blank, ACPS Chief HR Officer, informed the school board that the contracts for Units I and IV were approved for ratification. These contracts include a 0.5% COLA increase and two health premium holidays. The school board approved the ratification of these contracts.

Vote to Meet in Executive Session in July

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session in July pending any appeals or unfinished business.

REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jenna Puffinburger, Student Member of the Board

Jenna updated the school board on her completed SMOB Blog handbook that she created throughout her tenure on the school board. This handbook includes everything from post-election questions to voting rights to proper attire. It is her hope that this handbook will get passed down to the new SMOB each year, with each new member adding their own tips for success as the Student Member of the Board.

NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, July 19, 2016, at the Central Office, 108 Washington Street, Cumberland, MD. The Work Session will begin at 5 p.m., and the Business Meeting will begin at 7 p.m. Both meetings will take place in the Washington Boardroom. **Please note the date change from the typical second Tuesday of the month.**

CONSTITUENTS' COMMENTS

John Reuschlein, Sara Dunlap, Brian White, Keith Mikula, Kim Sloane, Peggy Bass

This group of individuals, which includes the president of ACEA, teachers at Allegany High School, and an IA at Cash Valley Elementary School, approached the school board regarding three key issues: involuntary transfers/displaced employees; student cell phone misuse; and student and staff safety. They addressed the school board in the hopes that better communication and collaboration will improve the school system and so that school board members and administrators were aware of some of the expectations of educators prior to beginning a new school year.

Staff would like to be informed of open positions within the school system and asked to be transferred by HR rather than having to go through the process of being interviewed.

A number of teachers indicated that cell phones have become a big distraction in their classrooms and prohibit successful instruction. The group believes in teaching responsible use of technology but would like to see more definitive and stricter policy guidelines for misuse of cell phones.

Finally, an IA indicated that she has been the recipient of aggressive and violent student behavior and at times fears for her safety and the safety of other students. She would like to see a policy in place that would remedy this type of student behavior.

Tammy Fraley

Mrs. Fraley addressed the school board regarding an event hosted by the YMCA in partnership with other local organizations, the school system being one of them, called Project Hope. Project Hope is an event that will target middle school aged students regarding the detrimental results of drug and alcohol abuse. This event is scheduled for August 28th, only one week after the start of the school year. Mrs. Fraley would like to see sufficient advertising of the event from the school system so that students and families wishing to attend have the information well in advance of the event.