

BOARDROOM CHATTER

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Introduction of New Administrative Personnel

Dr. Cox introduced several new administrative personnel for the 2016-2017 school year:

- Kate Loghrie, Academic Dean at Mountain Ridge
- Laura Holland and Shawn Swisher, Assistant Principals at Braddock
- Chris Cassell, Assistant Principal at Washington
- Tessa Fairall, Assistant Principal at South Penn
- Shannon Imes, Assistant Principal at West Side
- Jeff Avey, Assistant Principal at Westmar and Coordinator of Fine Arts
- Lisa Stevenson, Assistant Principal at George's Creek and Coordinator of Library Media and Acceleration and Enrichment
- Wendy Main, Assistant Supervisor of Special Education
- Dr. Steve Thompson, Assistant Supervisor of Mathematics

Recognize 2016 Northrop Grumman Scholarship Recipient

The school board recognized Hayden Lindsey, 2016 graduate of Mountain Ridge High School, as this year's Allegany County recipient of the \$10,000 Northrop Grumman engineering scholarship. This scholarship competition is held for Maryland high school students who plan to attend an accredited college or university in an approved engineering curriculum upon graduation. The scholarship funds may be used at the recipient's discretion towards tuition, books, lodging, meals or lab fees. Hayden will be majoring in mechanical engineering at Bucknell University this fall.

A committee of NG employees selects the engineering scholarship winners. To be eligible, applicants must not only be residents of Maryland and graduating seniors, but also need a minimum composite SAT score of 1,700 or ACT score of 27 and a minimum GPA of 3.5.

By sponsoring this competition, Northrop Grumman hopes to attract students with an interest in science and math to contemplate entering the engineering field. For more information, visit www.northropgrumman.com.

Key Dates for 2016-2017 School Year

Dr. Cox updated the school board on several key dates for the upcoming 2016-2017 school year. They are as follows:

- New teachers had an orientation on August 8, 2016
- The first day of school for returning teachers was August 17, 2016
- Annual Back to School Convocation was held on August 18, 2016
- The first day of school for students will be August 23, 2016
- The first day of school for pre-k and kindergarten students will be August 30, 2016.

Board of Education

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

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for July 19, 2016, Work Session and Business Meeting.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of July 1-31, 2016.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of July 1-31, 2016.
4. Receive information technology report for the period of July 1-31, 2016.
5. Approve 2016-2017 Table Rates for School Bus Contractors.
6. Approve the appointment of Lawrence S. McKenzie, Chief Financial Officer, as the Designated Trustee for the MABE OPEB Trust.
7. Approve the following coal bids for the 2016-2017 school year from: Pine Mountain Coal Company, \$120 per ton (stoker) and \$110 per ton for Allegany High School; Collins Brokerage, LLC, \$103.71 per ton for Braddock, Fort Hill, and Washington.
8. Approve bid from Southern States Cumberland Coop, Inc. in the amount of \$1.4015 per gallon for heating oil for the 2016-2017 school year.
9. Approve the continuation of Refuse Hauling Contract with Brugmeier's Hauling from September 1, 2016, to August 31, 2017 in the amount of \$7,444.29 per month.

The school board approved the consent agenda.

WORK SESSION NOTABLES

Portable Electronic Devices / Technology Acceptable Use Follow-Up

Dr. Cox and John Reuschlein, President of ACEA, updated the school board on a portable electronic devices and the acceptable use of technology by students in schools. During the June board meeting, several teacher representatives addressed the board to voice their concerns about policy and procedural issues regarding cell phone use in classrooms.

In July, Dr. Cox and Mr. Reuschlein met with the teachers to get clarification on their issues of concerns. The top disruptions and referable offenses were narrowed down to academic dishonesty, student and staff privacy, pornography or illicit images and videos, and profanity. These concerns, however, weren't so much with the policy itself, but rather with the consistent treatment and enforcement across the district.

Dr. Cox spoke to principals and assistant principals at the annual Administrative Advance in August, and reiterated to them that teachers are in charge in their classrooms, and they make the decision as to if or when portable devices may be used. Their rules pertaining to the use of these devices in their classrooms should be clearly stated in the course syllabus. Teachers may not search the contents of any students' device; however, they can confiscate the phone for the duration of the class.

The section of the district's student handbook pertaining to the use of portable electronic devices has been revised, and is available on the school system's website under the [Parents or Students Resources](#) section. In addition, the school board policy committee will be recommending revisions to the language in the policy. This will need to have two readings before they modifications will become effective.

Responsible use of information technology supports or enhances the education of ACPS students. Students need to remember to be responsible with their personal electronic devices and should consult their teachers' syllabus for classroom expectations. Principals will be sure address these changes with students and staff at back to school meetings. Schools will also distribute a flyer at the beginning of the year that highlights these modifications.

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:

- **Allegheny High School:** The earthen retaining wall at the west side of the property is complete. The wall is 17' high and is adjacent to the running track. Work has also begun on the retaining walls at Bishop Walsh Road. There will be

two retaining walls that will allow staff to level the area for the athletic fields. The difference in elevation from the first floor to BW Drive is approximately 42'. The concrete footers at Area C are approximately 50% complete. Several sections of the concrete retaining wall between sections B and C have been poured. The total length of the wall is over 350' and is 18' high. Grading has begun for Section B. The area is being used to stage the concrete forms for Area C. Work will begin on the footers in this area next week. The structural steel fabricator has received over 200 tons of steel for the project and has begun fabricating the columns and beams. Steel should begin to arrive on site by the end of the month.

- **CIP 2017:** Staff has received the final approval for the FY 2017 CIP, which included the additional funding of \$3.5 million for Allegheny. Preparations are underway on the FY 2018 CIP.
- **Braddock Middle Roof Replacement:** The contractor has completed the replacement of the roof on the center classroom section of the building. The kitchen and breezeway roofs will be completed this week, after which work will begin on the auditorium, music rooms and shops.
- **South Penn Chiller Replacement:** The manufacturers factory technician started the air conditioner. Work continues on the control system, which will be complete by Wednesday. The new unit is a variable frequency drive. It adjusts the speed of the motor and the output of the compressor to match the cooling load of the building. The cooling tower fans are also variable frequency drives. This will result in a considerable energy savings.
- **Floor Replacement Projects:** The installation of the new floor tile at Washington is complete. Carpet is being replaced in one room at West Side.
- **Westernport A/C:** Installation of the new air conditioning units is complete. All of the units have been test run and are working well.
- **West Side:** Damaged fencing is being replaced around the playground and property line at Greene Street. A new computer lab was constructed on the ground floor. The former computer lab will be used as a classroom for the Chinese Immersion Program.
- **John Humbird:** The principal has reallocated spaces within the school and will now have a classroom dedicated to art instruction. The custodial staff has moved the art materials from the mobile classroom into the school, and plans are being made to have the classroom removed from the site.

Testing Commission Response Discussion

On or before September 1, 2016, each county Board of

WORK SESSION NOTABLES CONT.

Education is required to 1) review and consider the Commission to Review Maryland's Use of Assessments and Testing in Public Schools' findings and recommendations; 2) make comments and recommendations related to whether they accept or reject the Commission's findings and recommendations to the State Board; and 3) make the comments and recommendations available to the public on request.

Based on the findings and recommendations from the Commission, the school board responded as follows:

Recommendation 2.1A: Do you agree with the recommendation that the creation of an additional assessment in social studies at the middle school level should not go forward?

- Eliminate middle school social studies assessments. This is not a federal mandate.
- The content alignment work in middle school social studies may actually require more time and work than the testing would have. If so, it defeats the purpose.

Recommendation 2.2 A/B: Do you agree that the primary purpose of a standardized assessment may not be to attain an SLO? Do you agree that school districts should require no more than two teacher directed SLOs for the purpose of meeting the student growth requirements within the TPE?

- Agree. It is a good idea to reduce SLOs from three to two.

Recommendation 3.1: Do you agree that any staff member who has been properly trained at a school whom the principal deems capable should be allowed to fully administer, proctor, and/or accommodate a state and/or local standardized test?

- It is a fundamental principle of assessment that only trained, qualified individuals can administer standardized assessments or they are not standardized and thus non-comparable. The solution is to train more staff, not lower standards.

Recommendation 4.1: Do you agree with the Commission that July 15th should be established as a deadline for the return of the PARCC assessment data for the purpose of allowing enough time for districts and schools to inform practices?

- July 15th is a reasonable deadline as proposed by the Commission for receiving PARCC data. Even at that, it is a tight schedule to do planning for the next year.

Recommendation 5.1: Do you agree with the recommendation to require Superintendents to annually report two measures of testing time from the prior school year to the Board of Education?

- Having the Superintendents report annual on the number of hours students spend taking mandated assessments and the

number of days that the school schedule was changed schoolwide may be worthwhile, but since there will likely be little variation from year to year, this will almost certainly become perfunctory. At any rate, there will be little the Boards of Education can do to alter the schedule of mandated assessments, as they are presently constituted.

Recommendation 5.3: Do you agree with the Commission that MSDE should review and update the current Maryland Accessibility Features and Accommodations Manual to create appropriate consistency regarding accessibility and accommodations guidelines and clearly communicate them to staff?

- Special accommodations for students with disabilities are very time consuming and take students away from required services and instruction. It is also very difficult to assure the degree of standardization required to make comparisons meaningful. Therefore, this area needs additional consideration.

Recommendation 5.4/5/5: Do you agree that the State Board of Education should analyze and disaggregate the results of MSDE technology needs assessment to determine the implications for administering the mandated federal, State, and local assessments: And do you agree that there is a need to provide technology support through annual needs-based competitive technology grants to districts to minimize the impact on instruction in schools with technology deficits?

- It is obvious that the integration of technology is very uneven. Mandates need to be in accordance with this. The problem is often one of money. It is expensive to buy the technology and then to train the staff.
- We are in strong concurrence with state grants to help acquire the necessary technology.

Recommendation 6.1: Do you agree with the approach recommended by the Commission for phasing out the Biology HSA and replacing it with the Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA)?

- Yes. We agree that the Biology HSA should be phased out.
- Has anyone considered developing standardized exams based on the mandated HSA areas, including biology, which could be given as the course final exams within a prescribed class period at the end of each course? This would eliminate four extra tests at one stroke.

Recommendation 7.1/7.3: Do you agree with the Commission that the Superintendent should establish and appoint a District Committee on Assessment by December 2017 which reflects the size of the district and diversity of its schools? And do you agree that this committee should develop a way to seek input

WORK SESSION NOTABLES CONT.

from general educators, content specialists, and teachers working with specific groups?

- We are not sure that we need to add to the bureaucracy by developing yet another committee taking up the time of a number of people who already have heavy burdens. We recommend that the existing testing coordinator do this function. This is especially relevant since there will be so little that can be changed since, as the Commission discovered, we are the recipients of State and federal mandated assessments.
- Further, this committee will be comprised of, "...administrators, teachers, and parents..." the teachers shall include "...elementary, middle and high school..." It seems ironic that to save teachers instructional time, we pull them out of instructional time to analyze the testing program which will require them to learn the terminology, technique, purposes, value, and process of assessment at a more involved level in order to do their job.
- If such a committee is necessary, allow each district's testing office to collect the data and present it to the committee for whatever decisions they deem to make within the limited framework of the testing mandates as a better alternative.

Recommendation 7.2: Do you agree that school systems should report out PARCC results by mode effect until 100% of students are administered the assessment online?

- As we progress to being 100% online, we need to have provisions for the inadvertent failure of systems so schools know what to do in an emergency.

Recommendation 7.3: Do you agree that MSDE should develop a clear process for gathering, reporting and responding to concerns concerning the impact of the newly revised single administration and the developmental appropriateness of the PARCC assessment from school-based educators and test coordinators?

- Adjustments should be made to further reduce the impact of PARCC testing on instruction. The following should be investigated for additional streamlining – reducing the total length of the test; reducing the number of units of the test; making the units shorter.

Recommendation 7.5: Do you agree that MSDE should continue to report out the quality of early care whether districts choose a census or representative sampling approach to administering the KRA?

- Since local districts will have a choice in KRA between sampling and census, the results from district to district will be non-comparable and reporting statewide needs to reflect that.

Recommendation 7.7: Do you agree that the District Committee on Assessment should publish a calendar of assessments, expected feedback dates, the value of the assessment, and how it is contributing to improved classroom instruction, curriculum, and student outcomes on the district website?

- MSDE or the Commission should develop a common rubric that can be used for all of the districts. A calendar should be published that provides information on the assessments to parents.

CONSTITUENTS' COMMENTS

Mr. Wesley Mason, Constituent

Mr. Mason addressed the school board regarding past budgets. He is a graduate of Allegany High School's Class of 2015, and expressed that he has seen first hand what budget cuts do to schools. He feels that the budgets being passed are not setting students up to succeed, and he anticipates that we will gradually start to see the success of ACPS students decline as teachers and programs are cut and class sizes increase.

Evan West, UniServe Director for ACEA

Mr. West addressed the school board about several topics with one common theme, "power with" rather than "power over", stating that educators can be and should be empowered to share in decision making as much as possible. He indicated that two great examples of that happening was the work of the TPE Committee, the work of the Testing Commission, and most recently the collaboration that occurred to revise the cell phone policy.

Mr. West concluded by thanking the school board for the work that they put in to revise the cell phone and portable communication device policy and acknowledged that not only teachers, but also instructional assistants, voiced their concerns at the June school board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider First Reading of Policy for Staff Conduct with Students (File: GBEBB)

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose states “Law and policy clearly define types of prohibited conduct between employees and students. There are, however, additional forms of conduct which are improper and are also prohibited in ACPS.”

Consider First Reading of Information Technology Responsible Use – Students (File: JIK)

The school board approved the first reading of the above policy, whose purpose is “to establish the foundation for responsible use of information technology by ACPS students.”

Testing Commission Report Board Responses

The school board reviewed their recommendations in response to the Commission’s findings on Maryland’s Use of Assessments and Testing in Public Schools. These responses are detailed in the section, Work Session Notables.

Vote to Meet in Executive Session in September

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

NEXT MEETING

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Tuesday, September 13, 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.

REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Zachary Sterne, Student Member of the Board

Zach informed the school board that two Allegany High School students, Nicholas Warnick and Delanie Blubaugh, have advanced to the Maryland Association of Student Council’s Executive Board as staff members. They have also prepared a bid for Allegany High School and Washington Middle School to host the MASC convention in Ocean City, Maryland, this year.