

BOARDROOM CHATTER

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Present Proclamation Recognizing February as Black History Month

The school board presented a Proclamation to the Allegany Chapter of the NAACP recognizing February as Black History Month. The school board is committed to honoring African-Americans and recognizing their contributions to the history and culture of the United States.

Present Proclamation Recognizing February as Career and Technology Education Month

The school board presented a Proclamation to Candy Canan, CCTE Principal/Supervisor, recognizing February as Career and Technology Education Month, as designated by the Association for Career and Technical Education. Career and technical education provides Americans with a school-to-careers connection and is the backbone of a strong, well-educated workforce, which fosters productivity in business and industry and contributes to America's leadership in the international marketplace.

The ever-changing cooperative efforts of career and technical educators, business and industry stimulate the growth and vitality of the local economy and that of the entire nation by preparing graduates for career fields forecast to experience the largest and fastest growth in the next decade. Career and technical education also gives high school students experience in practical, meaningful applications of basic skills such as reading, writing, and math, thus improving the quality of their education and giving all students leadership opportunities in their fields and in their communities.

Present Certificates of Recognition to Sean Fiscus

The school board presented Allegany High School freshman, Sean Fiscus, with Certificates of Recognition for receiving the Davidson Young Scholars Program Award and the Maryland State Department of Education's Gifted and Talented Student Award while participating in the Gifted and Talented Program at Allegany.

Legislative Update

Dr. Cox updated the school board on two pieces of legislation that several educational organizations, including PSAAM, MABE, and MSEA, are tracking and working together to give input on.

The first is HB 400, which would allow local Boards of Education to have greater flexibility on school calendars in regards to inclement weather as well as the ability to reclaim Presidents' Day and Easter Monday without a waiver.

The second bill that is of concern to these educational organizations is SB 704 – Public School Charter Act of 2017, which if passed, would essentially create a 25th school district in Maryland. This would also authorize unlicensed and uncertified teachers to teach and would not hold charter school students to the same accountability standards as those of public school students. However, this would be funded by taking money from the public school system in which the FTE originated.

Calendar Update

Dr. Cox updated the school board on the proposed 2017-2018 school calendar. Two options were reviewed by principals and assistant principals, teachers and parents and then posted on the school system's website for comments and

Board of Education

Mrs. Laurie Marchini, President
Mrs. Sara-Beth Bittinger, VP
Mrs. Lorelee Farrell
Mrs. Tammy Fraley
Mr. Wayne Foote
Mr. Zachary Sterne, SMOB
Dr. David Cox, Superintendent

recommendations. A survey was conducted on which option was preferable, and out of 160 responses, 65% of respondents voted for Option 2, which has a start date for students of August 29, 2017.

Other significant dates include:

- 1st Day for Teachers – August 23rd
- Pre-K and K Begin – September 6th
- Parent Conference – October 3rd
- Supervisor PD – September 27th
- Principal PD – January 24th
- Parent Conference – February 14th
- Seniors' Last Day – May 18th
- Last Student Day – June 4th
- Last Student Day w/Snow Days – June 11th

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for January 12, 2017, Work Session and Business Meeting.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of January 1-31, 2017.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of January 1-31, 2017.
4. Receive information technology report for the period of January 1-31, 2017.
5. Receive Monthly Financial Report.

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:

- **Allegany High School Project:** The contractor is currently working on the following items:
 - Continuing to pour concrete footers and piers in sections A and B.
 - Laying concrete block in section B, which includes the large wall between the main hall and the gymnasiums
 - Completing the concrete floors in section C – the classroom wing
 - Installing electrical conduits and plumbing in section C, including the shops, cafeteria, and kitchen
 - Continuing work on the retaining wall adjacent to Lion's Center. Concrete has been poured for one section of this wall.
 - Construction of the retaining wall at the athletic fields is complete.
 - Work has begun on the retaining wall between the two main parking lots.
 - Wall A is 14' high, and Wall B is 12' high. The total elevation change by the walls is 51'.
 - Installation of the steel columns and beams in section C is complete.
 - The steel is being erected for section B.
 - Staff is working with the contractor, Lion's Center, adjacent property owners and the City on a plan to temporarily reroute traffic to the Lion's Center during construction of the new road from Bishop Walsh Dr. and the teachers' parking area.
 - Staff will meet with representatives from the County and the contractor to begin plans for the transportation and on-site storage of topsoil. The County has offered to provide the topsoil for the project at no cost to the school board. The topsoil will come from an area of the Barton Business Park where it was removed and stock piled during the recent construction of a shell building. ACPS plans to use County and BOE equipment and personnel to transport the topsoil from Rawlings to the site. The contractor's proposal included an alternate cost to supply the topsoil. Based on the contractor's proposal, the total savings realized will be \$272,000.
- **FY 2018 CIP:** On January 25th, staff attended the BPW meeting to provide additional information about FY 2018 CIP requests. Members of the BPW remain supportive of ACPS requests. The board approved the IAC

recommendations for the first round of funding. The IAC will make the next funding recommendations to the BPW before March 1st. These recommendations will total 90% of the total state funds available for FY 2018. The IAC will make final recommendations on April 20th, and the BPW will approve the final allocations after May 1st.

- **ASP:** Staff is awaiting the release of the FY 2017 ASP funds to reapply for the Frost Roof Replacement Project.
- **Cash Valley Water Heater:** Maintenance department staff will use Parent Conference Day to replace the large domestic water heater. The existing tank has corroded and developed several leaks.
- **Mountain Ridge Water Pressure Regulator:** Staff removed the main water pressure regulator and replaced it with a spare one that was in stock. The valve was rebuilt and is ready for the next failure. The incoming water pressure often exceeds 200 psi, and the valve's normal life is between 6-12 months.
- **LED:** Staff has installed LED lighting in rooms at the Career Center, the front canopy at George's Creek, and in the cafeteria at Parkside.

Graduation and Dropout Rate Report

Marsha Miller, ACPS Coordinator of Accountability, updated the school board on the graduation and drop out rates in ACPS. The four-year adjusted graduation rate is calculated by dividing the total diplomas earned by the four-year adjusted cohort. Students who drop out of high school remain in the adjusted cohort, that is, the denominator of the graduation rate calculation. The four-year cohort graduation rate in ACPS reached 90.24% in 2016, more than three points better than the 87.21% rate registered in 2010 and more than two points higher than the State of Maryland's graduation rate of 87.61%. The graduation rate for ACPS dipped slightly from last year's 92.06%. Mrs. Miller also explained that the five-year cohort graduation rate for students who took five years and graduated in 2015 for ACPS was 92.49%, which was once again higher than the State's rate of 89.11%.

Reporting the adjusted cohort graduation rate is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Education. It is accurate; it ensures that students who drop out are not counted as transfers; and it allows for comparisons across states and gives credit for students who take longer than four years to graduate. The adjusted cohort graduation rate is based on a prescribed method of tracking a given cohort of students to determine how many of them graduate from high school on time.

The four-year adjusted cohort drop out rate is the number of students who leave school, for any reason other than death,

within the four-year period divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort. As graduation rates have improved in ACPS, the drop out rate has been maintained at less than 10%. For 2016, the drop out rate for ACPS students was 8.56%, up slightly from the previous year's 6.64%. Ms. Miller explained that students drop out of school for several reasons: lack of interest, special court ordered cases, becoming a parent, pregnancy, and whereabouts unknown. Other factors that impact the drop out rate are students who quit and then return to school the following year, thus changing the year of their graduation. Students sometimes also return to school after more than one year.

ACPS implements a number of drop out prevention programs and services including Project Y.E.S., counseling, mentoring, summer school, student support teams, pupil personnel workers, alternative education, Virtual Academic Village, YMCA program, evening high school, special education services, attendance and behavior contracts, PBIS, home and hospital services, community based programs, after school programs, and early intervention.

Budget and State Aid Update

Mr. Larry McKenzie, ACPS Chief Business Officer, updated the school board on FY 2018 state and local aid. State Aid is broken down into the following segments: foundation programs, transportation grants, compensatory education, limited English proficiency, special education, guaranteed tax base, supplemental grants, and net taxable income phase-in at 80%. Wealth is used to gauge a county's ability to fund school activities based on its own resources. The formula is intended to be a wealth equalizer between state and local resources for education. School district wealth is formula-driven and takes into account the following measures: 50% of the personal property base; 100% of the net taxable income base; and 40% of the real property base. Allegany County currently ranks 21st in the state in terms of per pupil wealth, thus the majority of educational aid comes from state funding sources.

District wealth impacts all aid categories except transportation. District wealth is computed on a per pupil basis and compared to the state average, giving enrollment a direct impact on state aid. Allegany County had the 2nd largest percentage of K-12 enrollment decline in the state at 1.23%, or 102 students. The number of students who qualify for free and reduced meals dropped by 2.8%, or 130 students, to 55.1% of K-12 enrollment. The number of special education students increased by 38 students to 1,387. Special education is now 16.95% of K-12 enrollment in ACPS. The state's overall enrollment increased by 0.78%.

Since 2013, local government has funded the school system at Maintenance of Effort (MOE). MOE is considered the legal minimum that local governments are obligated to appropriate to their school systems and is determined by taking the prior year's local appropriation divided by the number of K-12 students within the district and then multiplying that sum by the current year's enrollment. Although in place since FY 2015, FY 2017 was the first year that some local governments were required to increase MOE if they failed to meet a five-year moving average Education Effort index. As a result, for FY 2017, Allegany County was required to increase its per pupil MOE by 1.7%. According to Mr. McKenzie, and based upon draft information, it is likely that the same thing will occur with this year's MOE calculation. As a result of the County's Education Effort again being below Maryland's five-year moving average, the County will be required to increase its MOE by 2.1% this year.

Several things for ACPS to consider for the FY 2018 budget are as follows:

- Healthcare still remains a concern for FY 2018, even though the volatility that was evident last year has subsided.
- Negotiations are still pending with all bargaining units.
- Restricted revenues for certain programs may be reduced, such as Title II, while other programs, such as the 21st Century Learning Grant for elementary students, will require an additional local fund match to meet program requirements in 2018.
- There has been a shift in the rank and make-up of some Title I schools that may have staffing implications within those schools.
- From a legislative standpoint, PSSAM and MABE are monitoring several bills that could potentially impact school systems' finances.

P-Tech Program Update

Dr. Kim Kalbaugh, ACPS Chief Academic Officer, along with David Jones, Autumn Becker, and Dr. Cynthia Bambara from Allegany College of Maryland, updated the school board on the progress of the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program. Allegany County Public Schools is the recipient of a \$100,000 planning grant from the Maryland State Department of Education for the establishment of this program, through collaboration with Allegany College of Maryland.

WORK SESSION NOTABLES CONT.

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 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 cyber security option within two years of graduating from ACPS. 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 within the Computer Technology program within six years.

The P-TECH Steering Committee includes business partners to support employment in the identified pathway as well as a designated industry liaison through one-on-one mentoring and internships. WMHS will be the program's industry partner, along with participation from Exclamation Labs, Willetts Systems, Inc., and First United Bank and Trust. In addition to ACM as the program's higher education partner, FSU will also participate in the partnership and will create 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.

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." The P-TECH vision is "Increasing Student Opportunities and Career Success through Innovative Collaboration among Business, Community, and Education."

The P-TECH Steering Committee has formed the following sub committees to work collaboratively to prepare for the implementation of the program: Public Relations, Curriculum/Program of Study, Essential Job Skills and Employer Support, Professional Development, Recruitment and Retention, Assessment, and Facilities and Equipment.

Program requirements include a designated school administrator, a designated college and business liaison, instructional support, student support, extended day/year programs, free transportation to college, internships, and job shadowing, free college tuition and books and no fees to students, and internship experience. In addition, SB 376 also requires that internships be paid, that 50% of participants must be FARMs students, and must utilize a school within a school model.

During grades 9 and 10, students will attend their home school. During grades 11 and 12, the cohort will enroll at the Career Center in the IT Networking Academy program. While in this program, students can potentially earn up to thirteen articulated credits from ACM. During grades 13 and 14, students will finish the Associate of Applied Science degree in Computer Science and Technology with a focus on

Cybersecurity at ACM. Students who elect to take an accelerated pathway may be able to finish the program in four or five years. Students may also elect to transfer to FSU upon completion at ACM.

Consideration to Develop Charge and Process for Membership Selection for a Blue Ribbon Commission

Dr. Cox asked the school board to consider approving the development of a charge and process for membership selection for a Blue Ribbon Commission in response to the school board goal of "increasing the efficiency in the way we operate our schools." The appointment of a Blue Ribbon Commission to include individuals outside of education to study the needs of the school system and make recommendations to the school board in an effort to increase the efficiency of ACPS operations. This Commission will also be asked to look specifically at elementary attendance zones to explore whether or not the current boundaries need to be adjusted.

Staff Engagement Survey

Dr. Cox also asked the school board to consider to construction of a staff engagement survey in an effort to meet another goal of "improving employee morale through effective communication." Dr. Cox plans to work with the Teacher Roundtable as a focus group to assist in the development of the survey so that the results will be beneficial for planning purposes. Additionally, Dr. Cox would also like to pursue the development of both a parent and student engagement survey in the future.

2017-2018 Academic Year Calendar Recommendations

Dr. Cox and Dr. Kalbaugh updated the school board on the 2017-2018 calendar options, which were shared with principals and assistant principals, teachers and parents and then posted on the school system's website for comments prior to conducting a survey to see which was the most popular version. Out of 160 responses, 65% for Option 2, which has a start date for students of August 29, 2017. The approved calendar is available on the school system's website at www.acpsmd.org.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration to Reappoint Superintendent to a Third Four-Year Term

The school board voted 3-1 to reappoint Dr. Cox to a third four-year term as the Superintendent of Schools in Allegany County.

Approval of the 2017-2018 Academic Calendar

The school board approved the 2017-2018 academic calendar, which is available on the school system's website at www.acpsmd.org.

Consideration to Develop a Process and Charge to Form The Board's Blue Ribbon Commission

The school board voted to give Dr. Cox the approval to proceed with the development of a group to review the structure and process for selecting members of a Blue Ribbon Commission.

Vote to Meet in Executive Session in March

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, pending any appeals or unfinished business.

CONSTITUENTS' COMMENTS

Evan West, UniServe Director of ACEA

Mr. West spoke to the school board regarding the solicitation of input from staff as it relates to the Board's goal of improving employee morale. He encouraged the school board to offer employees a safe environment in which to speak freely and comfortably without the fear of retribution in an effort to gather genuine and useful input. Mr. West also spoke as a parent in regards to the decision to reappoint Dr. Cox to another term as superintendent. He didn't take a position so as not to interfere with his role as UniServe Director; however, he did tell the school board that there is still much work to be done from changes in legislation, to the federal government's role in education, to communication both internally and with the public. He encouraged the school board to be thoughtful of how the voice of ACPS employees is represented when casting their vote on Dr. Cox's contract.

Wesley Mason

Mr. Mason spoke to the school board to voice his opinion on the reappointment of the Superintendent. Mr. Mason is in favor of extending Dr. Cox's contract, and feels that reasons for not choosing to extend his contract, such as budget shortfalls or low employee morale, are not solely the fault or responsibility of the Superintendent.

Zachary Sterne, Student Member of the Board

Mr. Sterne, who also serves as the Student Member of the Board, spoke on behalf of the students of the Allegany County Association of Student Councils, in favor of the renewal of Dr. Cox's contract. Members of the ACASC Executive Board shared with Zach very well thought out opinions and observations. They are grateful for Dr. Cox's support of the arts programs in ACPS, and they feel that the superintendent always finds the time to listen to the students' voices, which is made evident by his formation of the Student Advisory Council. In addition, past SMOBs also gave their support for the renewal of Dr. Cox's contract as Superintendent of Schools.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Consider Second Reading of Audio-Video Recording Policy (File: IIJ)

The school board approved the second reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to describe the limitation on the use of audio-visual recording devices during Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings."

Consider Second Reading of School Board Policy Process (File: BG)

The school board approved the second reading of the above policy, whose purpose is "to identify the process for developing, adopting, revising, and reviewing policy."

REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Zachary Sterne, Student Member of the Board

Zach updated the school board on the following:

- All four high schools received Hands-Only CPR training
- The ACASC Executive Board discussed the possibility of a county wide lobbying project. Details will be forthcoming.
- The ACASC legislative session was held in January. Four out of five pieces of legislation were passed, two of which were authored by Zach.
- Student government has begun a discussion on how to improve the organization.
- Students attended the MASC legislative session, where they had the opportunity to vote on various pieces of legislation as well as the State SMOB.
- A Spirit Night was held at Fat Boys Pizza.