

# BOARDROOM CHATTER

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## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### **Recognize Fort Hill Teacher for Receiving Teaching Fellowship**

The school board recognized Robby May, Social Studies teacher at Fort Hill High School, for being selected by the National WWII Museum to be a part of their prestigious two-summer teaching fellowship.

This summer, Mr. May will travel to New Orleans where he will study under world renowned WWII scholar and New York Times bestselling author Donald L. Miller, PhD. Thirty teachers from around the nation (of over 400 that applied) will be selected to participate in an intensive week-long seminar utilizing the vast resources of the Museum, including the expertise of educators, curators, and historians, to explore strategies for teaching the history of World War II.

During the 2017-2018 school year, participants will partner with Museum educators to develop and present their own professional development workshops. In July 2018, the cohort will reconvene in Normandy, France to explore firsthand the site of the 1944 D-Day landings, the largest amphibious invasion in history. Prior to both summer sessions, participants will interact with Dr. Miller, Museum educators, and one another through preparatory readings and online discussions.

### **Present Proclamation Recognizing March as Youth Art Month and Music in Our Schools Month**

The school board presented proclamations to Mr. Jeff Avey, ACPS Coordinator of Fine Arts, recognizing March as Youth Art Month and Music in Our Schools Month. Designated by the National Art Education Association, this year's theme for Youth Art Month is "The Power of Art." Art education contributes powerful

educational benefits to all 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.

This year's theme for Music in Our Schools Month, designated by the National Association for Music Education, is "Music Inspires." The study of music contributes to the development of young people through heightened skills in listening, reading, self-expression and creativity. The study of music is basic to 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, and programs should be maintained and improved for all students.

### **Recognize All-State Chorus Students**

The school board recognized the following students for their participation in All-State Chorus:

- Audrey Jones, Mountain Ridge, Women's Choir
- Laurel Plitnik, Mountain Ridge, Women's Choir
- Payton Chronister, Allegany, Women's Choir

## 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

- Patrick Godfrey, Mountain Ridge, Mixed Choir

### **Legislative Update**

With three weeks left in the General Assembly, Dr. Cox updated the school board on various pieces of legislation that PSSAM, MABE, and MSEA are monitoring as it relates to funding for public schools.

The bill for charter schools did not make it out of committee, which was a positive result for public schools. Potential issues at the federal level as a result of the President's budget would eliminate all Title II funding, which would equate to a \$600,000 loss for ACPS. The budget also calls for a total elimination of federal funding for after school programs.

## CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve minutes for February 14, 2017, Work Session and Business Meeting, and March 6, 2017, Special Work Session.
2. Approve routine personnel actions for the period of February 1-28, 2017.
3. Receive school construction/maintenance report for the period of February 1-28, 2017.
4. Receive information technology report for the period of February 1-28, 2017.
5. Receive Monthly Financial Report.

The school board approved the consent agenda.

# WORK SESSION NOTABLES

## ***Equal Opportunity Schools – Lead Higher Initiative***

Equal Opportunity Schools is a national education non-profit spearheading the Lead Higher Initiative in coordination with the White House, U.S. Department of Education, College Board, and the International Baccalaureate. EOS has also worked with the Education Trust to study AP/IB participation at every high school in the U.S.

Allegany County has been selected to be a member of the Lead Higher Initiative, and if approved by the school board, would join the second cohort of 120 schools across 26 states in the largest ever effort to reflect the nation's student diversity at the highest levels of K-12 education.

By joining Lead Higher, ACPS would receive match-funded technical assistance from EOS to help close access and closes gaps in AP and IB courses by Fall 2018. Mr. Joe Small of Lead Higher presented the school board with a custom data analysis package for 2015-2016 AP students in grades 11 and 12.

## ***Music in Our Schools Month/Youth Art Month Performance***

In honor of Music in Our Schools and Youth Art Month, the school board and audience was treated to a performance of chamber music by Fort Hill High School's clarinet ensemble under the direction of Mr. Joe Thompson. In addition, Mr. Avey informed the school board of a Student Art Show at the Allegany Arts Council that was held from March 20-31.

## ***National Heart Health Month Activities***

Mrs. Tanya Gomer, ACPS employee and Basic Life Saving Instructor, updated the school board on several activities that took place within the school system in February to highlight National Heart Month. February 3, 2017, was Go Red for Women Day, where staff and students were reminded to wear red to elevate awareness of heart disease and stroke as the number one killer of women. In addition, Mrs. Gomer, with the help of members of the Allegany County Association of Student Councils, facilitated eight Hands-Only CPR training sessions throughout the county. Trainings were conducted at the following locations:

- Central Office – 18 trained
- Allegany – 230 trained
- Braddock MSAFE – 33 trained
- Eckhart – 21 trained
- Fort Hill – 107 trained
- Mountain Ridge – 188 trained
- Career Center – 48 trained
- Washington MSAFE – 36 trained

Additionally, students learn Hands-Only CPR in comprehensive health classes, and staff members are certified in Heartsaver CPR-AED. So the impact to the local community is a total of 1,577 students and staff plus 37 coaches being trained in basic life saving skills.

Hands-Only CPR has only two easy steps: If you see a teen or adult suddenly collapse, 1) Call 911; and 2) Push hard and fast in the center of the chest to the beat of the disco song "Stayin' Alive." People feel more confident performing Hands-Only CPR and are more likely to remember the correct rate when trained to the beat of a familiar song.

## ***Maintenance and Construction Update***

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

- Allegany High School: Continuing to pour concrete footers and piers in Sections A and B; Laying concrete block in Section B, which includes the large exterior gym walls; Completed the concrete floors in Section C; 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; Work has begun on the retaining wall between the two main parking lots; Installation of the steel columns and beams in Section C is complete; The steel is being erected for Section B and the office suite and main hall in Section A; Construction of the interior walls in Section C is progressing. Most of the partitions on the first level are complete. Framing of the exterior walls is also in progress; Starting block work in the auditorium and locker rooms; Will begin bolting together the roof trusses for the gym; Maintenance continues to work with the contractor and architect on a plan to temporarily reroute traffic to the Lion's Center during construction of the new road from Bishop Walsh Drive to the Lion's Center and the teachers' parking area.
- FY 2018 CIP: On January 25<sup>th</sup>, staff attended the BPW meeting to provide additional information about 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 1<sup>st</sup>. These recommendations will total 90% of the total State funds available for FY 2018. The IAC will make final recommendations on April 20<sup>th</sup>, and the BPW will approve the final allocations after May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- ASP: Staff is awaiting the release of the FY 2017 ASP funds to reapply for the Frost Roof Replacement project.
- Maintenance Department: Staff removed and replaced the

## WORK SESSION NOTABLES CONT.

main water pressure-reducing valve at Westernport, which was similar to the one that was recently replaced at Mountain Ridge.

### ***Policy Regulations:***

- Attendance Policy (File: JED): The school board heard the regulations for this policy, whose purpose is “to define the school system student attendance policy.” Regular school attendance is expected of all students in ACPS. School attendance is directly related to school achievement. In order to maximize academic achievement, there must be a unified effort by all school staff, parents, students, and the community to improve overall school attendance. School administrators, teachers, and support staff are expected to make all reasonable attempts to assist students and parents in addressing those factors which cause students to be absent from school.
- Expense Authorization Reimbursement (File: DKC): The school board heard the regulations for this policy, whose purpose is “to identify the procedures for reimbursement of expenses incurred by staff and school officials in performing authorized school business.”

## NEW BUSINESS

### ***Consider Adopting FY 2018 Operating Budget***

The Superintendent’s Proposed FY 18 Operating Budget was presented in a special Work Session on March 6, 2017. The school board voted unanimously to adopt that budget as the Board of Education’s FY 2018 Proposed Operating Budget, which was presented to the County Commissioners on March 23, 2017.

### ***Consider First Reading of Attendance Policy (File: JED)***

The school board approved the first reading of this policy, whose purpose is “to define the school system student attendance policy.”

### ***Consider Approval of Blue Ribbon Committee Charge and Composition***

The school board and Superintendent adopted goals for the 2016-2017 year that included a goal to “increase efficiency in the way we operate our schools.” Part of that effort is to:

- Form a Blue Ribbon Commission of community leaders, including those outside of education, to study the needs of the school system, make recommendations to the school board and county commissioners, and develop a charge statement for the group;
- Evaluate the system’s operations including enrollment by school, use of staff, class sizes, coverage of necessary tasks, and use of available funding to find efficiencies and save money;
- Engage in a redistricting plan for the county which would be directed by a redistricting committee;
- Include a budget item for a consultant to work through the process of increasing efficiencies in the system; and
- Develop a communication plan for handling the process.

Dr. Cox will propose budget options to the school board for increased efficiency; serve as a resource to the county commissioners; facilitate and support the work of the Commission and subsequent redistricting efforts; facilitate and share information with the county commissioners and the public regarding findings; and incorporate these findings to inform Master Plan and Annual Operating Budget processes.

The membership of the Blue Ribbon Commission shall include community leaders both inside and outside of education and shall be stratified to provide for broad representation of multiple perspectives. Membership will include individuals who reside in different communities within Allegany County and will include educators, parents, community members at large and business professionals. Membership will not exceed eleven appointed members, with the Superintendent and his staff serving as non-voting and supporting ex-officio members.

Commission members may apply to serve or may be nominated. Any prospective member who may be considered by a nomination must agree to serve and must be confirmed by the person making the nomination. Applications and nominations will be received by the Superintendent in a process set forth by the Superintendent, who will recommend the Commission’s membership for appointment by the school board.

The Superintendent will also develop and solicit Requests for Proposals for consulting services and recommend for a consultant for school board approval who will facilitate the work of fulfilling the Commission’s charge. All Blue Ribbon Commission meetings will be open to the public.

### ***Consider Approval for Equal Opportunity Schools – Lead Higher Initiative***

## NEW BUSINESS CONT.

The school board tabled this vote until the finance department could confirm if there was money in the current year's budget to pay for this initiative.

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

The school board voted to meet in Executive Session on Tuesday, April 11, 2017, pending any appeals or unfinished business.

## UPDATES FROM THE SMOB

*Zachary Sterne, Student Member of the Board*

Zach updated the school board on the following:

- An election for 2017-2018 Allegany County Association of Student Councils officers was held on March 29, 2017.
- The ACASC Executive Board has been discussing charitable donations, lobbying projects, and an Ice Bucket Challenge fundraiser.
- Members of ACASC continue to meet with Bridges to Opportunity.