

BOARDROOM CHATTER

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SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Present Proclamation Recognizing Richard R. "Ricky" Arnold II

The school board presented a proclamation to honor astronaut, Ricky Arnold, Frostburg State University graduate, who will spend the next six months on the International Space Station as part of NASA's Year of Education on the Station. Arnold recently spoke to FSU and ACPS middle school students live from the ISS during a day of science-related activities and demonstrations.

FEA Preliminary Report on Facility Utilization and Analysis of Elementary Schools

In November 2017, the school board contracted with Facility Engineering Associates (FEA) for consultant services for facility utilization and analysis of elementary schools in ACPS. FEA was charged with assessing the physical condition and educational adequacy of the schools as well as bus routing scenarios prior to giving a recommendation to the Blue Ribbon Commission, which was formed to serve as a resource to the school board to work collaboratively with FEA.

After much review by FEA of enrollment and geographic data, conducting a facility condition and needs assessment, and educational adequacy appraisal, FEA's preliminary work found that while there are some buildings that are operating at or near capacity, each of the three Allegany County regions (eastern, central, western) has additional capacity at the elementary school level. The additional capacity is the equivalent of one additional school per region.

Future work of FEA over the next several weeks will look at building capacity, age, and the cost of operating and ongoing maintenance and repairs of specific schools in an effort to make recommendations to

the school board on how to best utilize the existing capacity and what effect that may have on transportation and school attendance areas. The school board will receive FEA's recommendations and consider them with ample opportunity for community input from the public and the Blue Ribbon Commission.

FEA's next meeting with the Blue Ribbon Commission is scheduled for May 16, 2018, at which time their discussions will focus on specific recommendations for more effective and efficient attendance and staffing balance in ACPS. The Blue Ribbon Commission will also host a public meeting to share FEA's report on May 30, 2018.

Legislative Update

Dr. Cox updated the school board on SB1265, the Maryland Safe to Learn Act of 2018. This bill makes comprehensive changes designed to improve the safety of public schools. It enhances the presence of school resource officers and/or local law enforcement in or near public schools and requires SROs to complete specialized training. It establishes a School Safety Subcabinet, which also serves as the governing board for the Maryland Center for School Safety. The mandated appropriation for MCSS operations is increased from \$500,000 to at least \$2 million, and the bill establishes a Safe Schools Fund to make grants to local school systems to assist in implementing the bill's provisions. This bill takes effect June 1, 2018.

2018-2019 Academic Year Calendar Update

Dr. Cox updated the school board on both the current school year academic calendar as well as the draft of the 2018-2019 calendar. Currently, as the result of seven missed school days this year, the last day

Board of Education

Dr. Sara-Beth Bittinger, President
Mrs. Tammy Fraley, VP
Mr. Nicholas Hadley
Mrs. Laurie Marchini
Mr. Wayne Foote
Dr. David Cox, Superintendent
Ms. Alexis Lashbaugh, SMOB

of school for students is June 12, 2018. The school system will seek a waiver for a pre-Labor Day start for next year and will present a calendar for approval at the April 23rd business meeting.

Highlights of the 2018-2019 school calendar are as follows:

- First day of school for teachers is August 22nd
- First day of school for students is August 29th
- Christmas break will begin December 21st with a three-hour early dismissal, and schools will reopen on January 2nd.
- The last day of school for students (without five built-in days) will be June 5th
- The last day of school for students (with five built-in days) will be June 12th

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** - The contractor is doing the following:
 - **Area C:** Hanging interior wooden doors; completing the bathroom partitions; completing the casework in the science labs; final cleaning of several classrooms.
 - **Area B:** Begun preliminary cleaning in the kitchen; installing curtain and scoreboards in the gym; painting the graphics and lines on gym floors; completing the flooring and wall mats in the wrestling room; starting the ceiling tile in the main hallway; completing the glass rail in the auxiliary gym.
 - **Area A:** Installing ceiling tile in the music area; completing the floor and side balconies in the theater; installing sound panels in the main street and band areas; painting ceilings and walls.
 - **Site:** Pouring concrete sidewalks at the bus drop off and main entrance; work will begin on the road near Lions' Center as soon as the weather permits – this will include the final layer of blacktop at the bus drop off and teachers' parking lot.
 - **General:** Installing lights and wiring for intercom, fire alarms, and security systems; staff from County Emergency Management toured the school on April 5th; work remains to be done in the mechanical rooms where final plumbing and electrical connections are being made.
 - **FF&E:** Staff has met with the architects and school administration on five occasions to identify and select furnishings. The architect developed a survey for input by the instructional staff. The selection of furnishings and price will be finalized this week, and a recommendation for the purchase will be made to the school board at the April 23rd business meeting.
- **FY 2019 CIP** – The IAC made the 90% recommendations for funding to the BPW on February 26th. The recommendations include \$3,845,000 for Allegany. Funding has not been recommended for the Bel Air Roof Project.
- **Security Initiative** – Governor Hogan has proposed \$125 million to be used to enhance school security and improvements. The IAC is planning to develop standards for the use of the funds. At the present time, there is no

line for the standards or which types of projects will be eligible. The security initiative in 2014 funded 58 projects in ACPS including the installation of 116 cameras, five servers, fifteen door entry systems, and Emergency Notification (panic) Buttons.

West Side Elementary School Chinese Immersion Program Capstone Trip to China

Several students from West Side Elementary School updated the school board on their recent capstone trip to China as the culmination of their time in West Side's Chinese Partial Immersion program. The following students gave presentations: Avery Samples, Cameron Bearer, Olivia Frazier, Corinna Hilderbrand, Natalie Green, Anna Hilderbrand, Emanuel Kujenga, Lila Hoherl, Avery Miller, Claire Buskirk, Addison Buskirk, Maya Hare, Milana Armiento, and Spencer Samples.

Topics the students spoke about included:

- Travel, including domestic and international flights and bullet trains
- Connecting with a former ACPS Chinese Immersion program teacher in China
- Culture, including transportation, city life, country life, squat potties, and bartering
- The active lifestyle of the Chinese
- Traditional tea service (served the school board tea)
- Currency
- Food
- Educational experiences, including visits to the Temple of Heaven, Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, the Giant Panda Research Center, the Muslim Quarter, a Chinese middle school, and the Great Wall of China; life in a traditional Hutong; rickshaw rides and bike rides on the ancient city wall; terracotta warriors; and calligraphy class.

Mind-Body Wellness Workshop Presentation

ACPS school counselors, Jill Crawford and Moriah Cohen, updated the school board on a recent mind-body wellness workshop that they were able to attend presented by Dr. James Gordon, the founder of the Center for Mind-Body Medicine. The one-day workshop focused on ways to address trauma associated with addiction in a non-medical way. It was also designed as a way to help teach students how to overcome adverse childhood experiences and to help educators help themselves. Crawford and Cohen learned relaxation and tension-reducing coping skills and a variety of holistic approaches to treating stress and anxiety, including meditation, diet, exercise, and sleep. Both counselors have begun to incorporate what they have learned into their guidance lessons

and have shared with staff in an effort to help create a community of health and wellness.

Finance Report

Mr. Larry McKenzie, ACPS Chief Finance Officer, updated the school board on financial information as of March 2018. They are as follows:

- Legislative auditors are currently conducting field work, and their goal is to conclude this work by the end of August. A report to the school system would be forthcoming after that.
- Spending on legal fees has slowed and is anticipated to have a positive variance by the close of the fiscal year.
- Spending for substitutes and non-public placements both have a positive variance.
- Utilities fluctuate, but currently have a positive variance.
- We have spent less of a percent of the budget this year as compared to last year in transportation.
- Healthcare costs continue to trend well, and we are more than \$1 million better in claims spending this year than last.

Technology Report

Mrs. Nil Grove, ACPS Chief IT Officer, updated the school board on several departmental highlights from March. They are as follows:

- Marking period three grading window opened March 19th through April 4th. Readjusted this grading window and report card window due to four snow days this marking period.
- March was a month of course schedule requests by students entering grades 6-12 in the fall. As a result, students and parents continue to dominate the top four spots in site visits to Aspen. Health takes two of the top fifteen visits.
- Fort Hill will run a modified block schedule next year. Set student course requesting window to reopen for next year for Fort Hill only from March 26-29 for students to pick an additional credited class. With the modified block, students will be able to earn an additional credit per year for a total of eight credits as opposed to seven.
- All of the medical assistance historical records up to 2015 and current billing is now set up and in use on the new metro data system.
- Based on an MSDE telepresence grant, ACPS will receive four more Wall-E robot units for schools and at home services.
- Technology infrastructure equipment for the new Allegany is arriving. Staff submitted the 2018 application for e-rate reimbursements. Of the \$691,566 submission, if approved, ACPS could receive \$507,163 in reimbursement for telecommunications and technology.
- Closed enrollment and attendance for February 2018 will 8,596 students, down 54 from this time last year. Of the 8,596 students, 4,867 or 56.62% are FARMS.
- Provided both the weighted and non-weighted GPA in Aspen for school counselors.
- Tyler forms are working. Worked with HR and Finance to establish a Go-Live date of April 2019 for the HR/payroll portion of the ERP.
- The legislative audit has begun.

STUDENT BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Ms. Alexis Lashbaugh updated the school board on the following items:

- March 14th schools participated in the National School Walk Out in honor of the victims of the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting.
- March 15th ACASC hosted a mental health forum.
- ACASC held elections for 2018-2019 officers. They are as follows:
 - President/Alternate SMOB – Jocelyn Weston
 - VP/SMOB – Eesha Bokil
 - Secretary/Treasurer – Coleton Furlow
 - Parliamentarian – John Toothaker
 - PR Officer – Omaer Naem
 - 2nd VP – Kelsey Darber
- ACASC held an Ice Bucket Challenge to raise money for ALS research.
- March 11th is the MASC Convention in Ocean City
- Alexis attended the March for Our Lives in D.C. on March 24th.
- Allegany's varsity mock trial team won regionals and will now advance to the semi-finals in Annapolis.

BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

Tammy Fraley

Mrs. Fraley had the opportunity to attend a number of events over the past month, including the following:

- ACASC Mental Health Forum
- Fix the Fund Education on the Hill event in Annapolis
- DARE celebration at South Penn Elementary School
- Toured Beall Elementary and Mountain Ridge High Schools with Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Karen Salmon
- Center for Career and Technical Education's National Technical Honor Society Induction Ceremony
- National School Boards Association conference in San Antonio, TX. Mrs. Fraley made a number of important contacts while there as well as returned home with very valuable information to share with her colleagues that she learned from her participation in more than fifteen workshops and learning sessions.

Laurie Marchini

Mrs. Marchini had the opportunity to attend the following events during the past month:

- Toured Beall Elementary and Mountain Ridge High Schools with Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Karen Salmon
- Mountain Ridge High School's Historical Research Methods exhibit, "The Real History of Fake News", at the Allegany Museum
- DARE celebration at South Penn Elementary School
- Mrs. Marchini is working towards her certification in Mind-Body medicine
- Allegany High School's walk-in event

Wayne Foote

Mr. Foote offered his congratulations to the players, coaches, cheerleaders, advisors, and more for their performances during this year's basketball season. He also noted that he serves as the school board's representative on the Local Advisory Committee and stressed the great work being done by this group and at the Career Center.

Nicholas Hadley

Mr. Hadley also had the opportunity to attend a number of the same events that Mrs. Fraley and Mrs. Marchini attended, in addition to the event at Frostburg State University for middle school students to hear from NASA astronaut and FSU alum, Ricky Arnold, as he spoke to them from the International Space Station.

Dr. Sara-Beth Bittinger

Dr. Bittinger encouraged her fellow school board members to review the Board Member Handbook in preparation for their upcoming retreat on April 17th with a consultant from MABE. She stressed that it was very important for board members to become familiar with their roles in the school system.

Dr. David Cox

Dr. Cox encouraged the public to make an effort to attend one or more of the below high school musicals:

- Allegany High School, "Sound of Music", April 13th and 14th at 7 p.m. and April 15th at 2 p.m.
- Mountain Ridge High School, "Thoroughly Modern Millie", April 13th and 14th at 7 p.m. and April 15th at 3 p.m.
- Fort Hill High School, "Aida", April 12-14 at 8 p.m. and April 15th at 2 p.m.